

Camping

Curecanti offers a variety of drive-in, boat-in and hike-in campgrounds. Facilities range from Elk Creek Campground with showers, marina, restaurant, amphitheater and visitor center, to the remote West Elk Creek Boat-in Campsite located in an historic setting on the secluded West Elk Arm of Blue Mesa Lake.

Major Facilities

	Elk Creek	Lake Fork	Stevens Creek	Cimarron
Location	16 mi west of Gunnison	27 mi west of Gunnison	12 mi west of Gunnison	20 mi east of Montrose
Elevation	7540	7580	7540	6895
Number of sites	179	87	54	22
Fee per night	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$10.00
Water	yes	yes	yes	yes
Flush Toilets	yes	yes	no	yes
Vault Toilets	yes	yes	yes	yes
Handicapped Access	yes	yes	yes	yes
Evening Programs	yes	yes	yes	yes
Visitor Center	yes	yes	no	yes
Boat Launch Ramp	yes	yes	small boats	no
Marina	yes	yes	no	no
Restaurant	yes	no	no	yes
Picnic Tables	yes	yes	yes	yes
Fire Grates/Grills	yes	yes	yes	yes
Electric Hookups	no	no	no	no
RV Dump Stations	yes	yes	no	yes
Gray Water Disposal	yes	yes	yes	yes
Pull-thru Sites	15	16	none	5
Walk-in Sites	16	5	none	none
Showers	yes	yes	no	no
Laundry	no	no	no	no

Limited Facilities

Dry Gulch

Just north of U.S. Highway 50, 17 miles west of Gunnison. Ten sites among large cottonwood trees. Picnic tables, fire grates, vault toilets and water. Fee: \$10.00 per night.

Red Creek

Just north of U.S. Highway 50, 19 miles west of Gunnison. Five sites among large cottonwood trees. Picnic tables, fire grates, vault toilets and water. Fee: \$10.00 per night. New group site is available by reservation only. Fee: \$2.00 per person, \$20.00 minimum.

Gateview

Extreme south end of the Lake Fork arm of Blue Mesa Lake. Access via Colorado Hightway 149, 7 miles west of Powderhorn. Proceed north 6 miles on an improved narrow gravel road. Seven sites located in a deep, narrow canyon. Picnic tables, fire grates, vault toilets and water. No fee.

Ponderosa

Northwest end of the Soap Creek Arm of Blue Mesa Lake. Access via Colorado Highway 92, 1/2 mile west of Blue Mesa Dam. Proceed north 7 miles on the Soap Creek gravel road. Nine walk-in sites and 20 drive-in sites are located among scattered pine trees. Picnic tables, fire grates, vault toilets, water, boat ramp and horse corral. Fee: \$10.00 per night. Note: The first 7 miles of the Soap Creek road are accessible to trailers and recreational vehicles during dry conditions. Rain can make the road very muddy and hazardous.

East Portal

Two miles below Crystal Dam at the bottom of the Black Canyon. Access via Route 347, 6 miles north of junction with U.S. Highway 50. Proceed 5 miles down East Portal Road. Fifteen sites are shaded by box elder trees. Campground is located near the historic Gunnison River Tunnel. Picnic tables, fire grates, vault toilets, water and visitor contact station. Fee: \$10.00 per night. Note: Trailers, buses and recreational vehicles are not permitted on the East Portal Road because of the steep grade and sharp, narrow curves.

East Elk Creek

Just north of U.S. Highway 50, 16 1/2 miles west of Gunnison. Two groups sites located under large cottonwood trees accommodate a total of 50 people. Picnic shelter and tables, fire grates, campfire circle, vault toilets and water. Fee: \$2.00 per person, \$30.00 per night minimum. Note: East Elk Creek is a group campground, available by reservation only.

General Information

Backcountry and Boat-in Camping

Several sites are located on Blue Mesa, Morrow Point, and Crystal Lakes. No reservations or permits are required. Information is available at Elk Creek, Lake Fork and Cimarron Visitor Centers during the summer months. “Boat-In Camping” and “Hiking” handouts provide additional information.

Reservations

Camping is permitted in designated campgrounds on a first-come, first-serve basis. Curecanti has no campsite reservation system except for organized group camping. Campgrounds may fill to capacity on holidays and weekends. Try to arrive by 10:00 a.m. to assure yourself of a site.

Fees and Water

Full fees are collected from mid-May through mid-September when water is available in the campgrounds. Drinking water during other times of the year can be obtained at the Elk Creek Picnic Area. Campgrounds remain open until closed by snow or freezing temperature. Generally, sites are accessible at Elk Creek year-round and at Lake Fork and Cimarron from mid-April through November. During the off-season, mid-September through mid-May, a limited service fee will be charged.

Limit Of Stay

Length of stay is unlimited at all campsites except in the designated 14 day sites.

Terrain and Weather

Elk Creek, Lake Fork and Stevens Creek Campgrounds are located close to Blue Mesa Lake in treeless, sagebrush, mesa country. The Cimarron campground, on the banks of Cimarron Creek, is more sheltered. Campgrounds with trees include Dry Gulch, Red Creek, Gateview, Ponderosa, East Portal and East Elk Creek Group Campground. Summer days at Curecanti are warm and dry, but strong afternoon winds blowing off the lake can make temperatures feel cool. Winds quiet toward the evening.

Firewood

Driftwood may be collected and used as a fuel source. Standing timber, alive or dead, may not be cut or used as fuel.

Interpretive Services

Evening programs, Morrow point Lake Boat Tours and other ranger conducted activities are scheduled throughout the summer months. Information can be obtained from campground bulletin boards and at the visitor centers. Tune to radio station 1610 AM at the park for traveler information.

Groceries

Small privately owned stores with limited selections are located within 2 miles of each major campground. Complete services can be found in Gunnison and Montrose.

Attention

A complete list of campground rules and regulations is posted at each campground and is available at the Elk Creek, Lake Fork, and Cimarron Visitor Centers.

Information and Group Reservations

Superintendent, Curecanti National Recreation Area, 102 Elk Creek, Gunnison CO 81230 (970) 641-2337

